AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

In the claims:

1-38 (canceled)

39. (previously presented) A method for identifying bacteria in a test sample, the method comprising:

(a) amplifying a portion of 23S rDNA present in the test sample using a primer pair comprising a first primer comprising one or more oligonucleotides having a sequence as shown in SEQ. ID. NO: 1; and a second primer comprising an oligonucleotide having a sequence as shown in SEQ. ID. NO: 2, to thereby yield amplicons; and then

(b) probing with the amplicons of step (a) oligonucleotides designed to identify bacteria which may be present in the sample, wherein selective hybridization of the amplicons to the oligonucleotides indicates the identity of the bacteria present in the sample.

40. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 39, wherein in step (b) oligonucleotides designed to identify at least eight bacterial species are probed.

41. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 39, in which are probed oligonucleotides designed to identify at least one of *Escherichia coli*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Enterococcus spp.*, *Klebsiella spp.*, *Enterobacter spp.*, *Proteus spp.*, *Pneumococci*, and coagulase-negative *Staphylococci*.

42. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 39, wherein in step (b) oligonucleotides designed to identify at least ten bacterial species are probed.

43. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 39, in which are probed oligonucleotides designed to identify at least one of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Proteus mirabilis*, *Enterococcus feacium*, *Enterococcus feacalis*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, coagulase-negative *Staphylococcus*, *Listeria spp.*, *Stenotrophomonas maltophilia*, *Burkholderia cepacia*, and *Escherichia coli*.

44. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 39, in which the oligonucleotides have sequences selected from the group consisting of SEQ. ID. NOS: 3-7, 9-13, 15-19, 21-28, 30-32, 39-41, 44-49, 51, and 53-58.

45. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 39, in which the oligonucleotides have sequences selected from the group consisting of SEQ. ID. NOS: 8, 14, 20, 29, 33-38, 42, 43, 50, 52, and 59.

46. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 39, in which the oligonucleotides have sequences selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS: 3-59.

47. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 39, in which the oligonucleotides have sequences selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS: 60-63.

48. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 39, wherein in step (a), the 23S rDNA present in the test sample is amplified by the polymerase chain reaction (PCR).

49. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 39, wherein in step (a), the 23S rDNA present in the test sample is amplified by transcription mediated amplification.

50. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 39, in which the oligonucleotides are attached to a support material.

51. (canceled)

52. (canceled)

53. (canceled)

54. (canceled)

55. (canceled)

56. (canceled)

57. (canceled)

58. (canceled)

59. (canceled)

60. (canceled)

61. (canceled)

62. (currently amended) A diagnostic kit for the identification of one or more bacterial species, the kit comprising an amplification primer pair having a first primer and a second primer, each first primer having a sequence as shown in~~selected from the group consisting of~~ SEQ. ID. NO[[S]]: 1 and each second primer having a sequence as shown in SEQ. ID. NO: 2, and further comprising one or more oligonucleotides capable of specifically hybridizing to a segment of bacterial 23S ribosomal nucleic acid product amplified using SEQ. ID. NOs: 1 and 2~~each second primer having a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ. ID. NOS: 3-63~~.

63. (currently amended) The diagnostic kit according to Claim 62, wherein the ~~first and second primers are~~ oligonucleotide is affixed to a support substrate.

64. (previously presented) The diagnostic kit according to Claim 62, wherein one of the first primer or the second primer is labeled.

65. (previously presented) The diagnostic kit according to Claim 62, wherein one of the first or second primers is labeled with digoxigenin.

66. (canceled)

67. (canceled)

68. (canceled)

69. (canceled)

70. (canceled)

71. (canceled)

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73. (canceled)

74. (canceled)

75. (canceled)

76. (canceled)

77. (canceled)

78. (new) The diagnostic kit according to Claim 62, wherein the one or more oligonucleotides has a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ. ID. NOS: 3-63.

79. (new) The diagnostic kit according to Claim 62, in which the one or more oligonucleotides has a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ. ID. NOs: 3-7, 9-13, 15-19, 21-28, 30-32, 39-41, 44-49, 51, and 53-58.

80. (new) The diagnostic kit according to Claim 62, in which the one or more oligonucleotides has a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ. ID. NOs: 8, 14, 20, 29, 33-38, 42, 43, 50, 52, and 59.

81. (new) The diagnostic kit according to Claim 62, in which the one or more oligonucleotides has a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ. ID. NOs: 3-59.

82. (new) The diagnostic kit according to Claim 62, in which the one or more oligonucleotides has a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ. ID. NOs: 60-63.

83. (new) The diagnostic kit according to Claim 62, in which the one or more oligonucleotides has a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ. ID. NOs: 4, 5, 6, 7, 10,

12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 26, 28, 30, 31, and 32.

84. (new) The diagnostic kit according to Claim 62, in which the oligonucleotides are designed to identify at least ten bacterial species.

85. (new) The diagnostic kit according to Claim 62, in which the one ore more oligonucleotides are designed to identify at least one of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Proteus mirabilis*, *Enterococcus feacium*, *Enterococcus feacalis*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, coagulase-negative *Staphylococcus*, *Listeria spp.*, *Stenotrophomonas maltophilia*, *Burkholderia cepacia*, and *Escherichia coli*.